



EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES LISBON • PORTUGAL

U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE

June 2012 | [Clique aqui para a Versão Portuguesa](#)

From the Ambassador's Desk | [A Bi-Monthly Update from the U.S. Embassy in Lisbon](#)



MESSAGE FROM AMBASSADOR KATZ

We are very pleased with the great success of the Chicago 2012 NATO Summit. We must not forget that, two years ago in Lisbon, preliminary steps were taken that were critical to the success of the Chicago Summit and future of the NATO alliance. Among other advances, NATO allies have formally agreed to transfer security responsibility across Afghanistan to Afghan forces in 2013. This is a significant step towards transition as U.S. and international forces prepare to end their combat mission in the country in 2014. This edition also focuses on the efforts that the U.S. and our Embassy are making in diminishing discrimination against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender individuals, as well as addressing our shared challenges of childhood obesity. Our Access Africa Forum features business and government leaders from Portugal, the United States and Mozambique, and aims to bring companies together and promote partnerships for increased trade and investment in Lusophone Africa. Finally, we highlight the Kindle Mobile Learning Initiative that will provide access to educational, cultural and scientific content through our American Corners located in Portuguese universities. As always, we welcome your [comments](#).



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CHICAGO NATO SUMMIT 2012

Drawing a road map for NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan and agreement on steps to increase the alliance's defense capabilities are the notable achievements of the NATO summit, President Obama delivered a final assessment of the meeting held over the weekend in Chicago. Citing an "unwavering commitment to collective defense," Obama said NATO nations agreed to invest in defense capabilities and new technologies that meet the alliance's security needs. Another important summit achievement was the agreement to wind down the 10-year operation in Afghanistan. The NATO nations troops will steadily draw down as Afghan National Security Forces take the leadership role by the middle of next year, with NATO troops remaining in a support mode. By the end of 2014, President Obama said, the plan calls for Afghan forces to take full responsibility for their country's security. President Obama called the meeting of such a wide range of nations "unprecedented"; it included 28 NATO members and 13 leaders from European, Middle Eastern, North African and Asian nations. Obama said "to see the breadth of those countries represented in that room is to see how NATO has truly become a hub of global security".

[Learn more about Chicago NATO Summit 2012](#)



President Barack Obama

INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA

On May 17, nations around the world marked International Day Against Homophobia, a day set aside to speak out against the stigmatization and discrimination of gays and lesbians around the world. The United States is a strong supporter of equal rights for all citizens and condemns violence against the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community that exists in many countries. As Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has said, "there is more to do to turn the tide of inequality and discrimination against the LGBT community. If you are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, know that the United States stands with you and we are unwavering in our commitment to ending this cycle of hate". Challenges remain for the LGBT community even in countries like the United States and Portugal that have strong human rights records. U.S. Embassy Lisbon echoes the State Department's call for an end to discrimination and mistreatment of LGBT persons wherever it occurs.

[Learn more about International Day Against Homophobia](#)



Secretary Clinton's landmark speech in Geneva

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE EMBASSY

CHILDHOOD OBESITY CONFERENCE

On May 3-4, in a joint initiative organized by the Embassy, the Fulbright Commission and Harvard Medical School Portugal Program, a conference entitled "Childhood Obesity - the Epidemic of the 21st Century" was held at the Gulbenkian Foundation. As Portugal and the United States face an "epidemic" of childhood obesity, sharing of national best practices contributes to awareness and prevention down the road in both our countries. We were pleased to have the participation of H.E. Nuno Crato, Minister of Education, H.E. Paulo Macedo, Minister of Health and U.S. Assistant Surgeon General Penelope Slade-Sawyer. First Lady Michelle Obama sent a message to conference participants congratulating them for tackling this important subject.

[Learn more about the Childhood Obesity Conference](#)



Otilia Reis (Director, Fulbright Foundation Portugal), Ambassador Katz, Minister Nuno Crato and Jorge Soares

U.S. ASSISTANT SURGEON GENERAL IN PORTUGAL

On May 3, Assistant Surgeon General Slade-Sawyer visited Escola EB1 of Abóboda where she had the opportunity to know more about the "Fruit Heroes", a project promoted by the Portuguese Association Against Child Obesity. This project reached more than 500 primary schools and increased by 26% the number of consumed fruit in this age group. Penelope Slade-Sawyer was welcomed by the "Fruit Heroes" of the school all dressed as fruits and during the school tour had a chance to see other interesting educational projects such as the school vertical garden, made with recycled plastic bottles, and maintained by the students.

In addition, the Embassy and the Portuguese Association Against Child Obesity (APCOI) jointly organized a fun fitness event called "Walk for Life" to support the prevention of child obesity in Portugal. The fitness class, which was offered by VivaFit, counted on the participation of 50 people, including a group of Portuguese primary and high-school students and Embassy staff.

[Learn more about the Walk for Life](#)



Walk for Life fun fitness group

ACCESS AFRICA FORUM

The Access Africa Forum “business triangulation” conference was held May 31, in Lisbon. The intent was to bring companies from all three continents together and offer a targeted combination of networking engagements, market insights, and information on official (government/IO) programs that facilitate trade and investment. Presentations were made by public and private sector experts ranging from representatives of the EXIM Bank, the World Bank and the African Development Bank (AFDB), as well as representatives from the Mozambican Business Promotion Agencies.

[Learn more about the Access Africa Forum](#)

ACCESS AFRICA FORUM
PORTUGAL - A GATEWAY TO AFRICA
MOZAMBIQUE
CENTRO CULTURAL DE BELÉM, LISBON | MAY 31, 2012



KINDLE MOBILE LEARNING INITIATIVE

The State Department has established a partnership with Amazon.com and will provide, through U.S. Embassy Lisbon, Kindle e-readers to the seven American Corners located in Portuguese universities. This Kindle Mobile Learning Initiative marks the first time Amazon has partnered with a U.S. Government agency to engage readers around the world in near real-time. In addition to the devices, the Embassy will provide fiction and non-fiction titles across a broad range of themes, including American classics, economy and finance, science and technology, society and culture, culture and education, as well as content on request by American Corner users. Kindles will be available for lending and taking home for American Corners users.

[Learn more about the American Corners](#)



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